

Gregory Ariail

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Current Position:

Assistant Professor at the University of West Alabama

Degrees:

M.F.A. in Creative Writing, University of Alabama, 2022

Ph.D. in English Language and Literature, University of Michigan, 2018

M.St. in British Literature, 1780-1900, Oxford University with *Distinction*, 2010

B.A. in English from the University of Georgia, *summa cum laude*, 2009

Publications:

Books:

Gnomes: A Strange History (forthcoming, Reaktion Books)

Hermits Die on Thursday: Stories of Appalachia and the Dark Ages (forthcoming, Mercer University Press, 2025)

The Gospel of Rot: A Novel (Mercer University Press, 2022)

Peer-Reviewed Academic Articles:

“Willa and Edwin Muir’s Alternative Kafka: Translation, Imitation, and the Fable” in *Modernism/modernity* (2023)

Short Fiction:

“Hunting Season” in *Phantom Drift* (2020)

“Elegy for My Father” in *The Florida Review* (2020)

“Transubstantiation” in *Indiana Review* (2019)

“All Hermits Died on Thursday” in *The Southeast Review* (2019)

“The Wonder Rabbi” in *Juked* (2019)

“Queen Elizabeth as Fungus” in *The Golden Key* (2018)

“The Hog Drive” in *Animal* (2018)

“Eljay’s Exile” in *DIAGRAM* 14.6 (2014)

Nonfiction:

“Mountains I’ll Never Reach” in *CutBank* (2020)

“The Dark Quadrangle” in *The Journal* (2020) [nominated for a Pushcart Prize]

“A Geology of Memory” in *The Common* (2020)

“The Mysterious Lives of Appalachian Hermits” in *The Offing* (2019)

Literary Essays:

“On Reengaging with Franz Kafka’s Astonishing Worlds” in *Literary Hub* (2020)
“Anna Kavan and the Rise of AutoSpec” in *Los Angeles Review of Books* (2020) and featured in *Longreads* (2020)

Book Reviews:

“The Cosmopolitan Magic of *The Fox and Dr. Shimamura*” in *Kenyon Review* (2020)
“The Uncanny, the Unsavory, the Uncharted: Brian Evenson’s *Song for the Unravelling of the World*” in *Black Warrior Review* (2019)
“A Melancholy Tightrope Act: The Beautiful Spectacle of Sabrina Orah Mark’s ‘Wild Milk’” in *The Millions* (2018)
“Anna Kavan’s Ice Age Dreams” in *The Millions* (2017)

Current Project:

The Mysterious Lives of Appalachian Hermits: A critical book exploring over a hundred stories of obscure Appalachian hermits from Georgia to Maine, both historical and fictional, and linking them to medieval hermit traditions and the figure of the recluse in Wordsworth, Sir Walter Scott, and Henry David Thoreau.

Teaching as Primary Instructor at the University of Alabama:

EN 408: Topics in Advanced Creative Writing: Reimagining the Medieval (Fall 2022, Summer 2024)
EN 408: Topics in Advanced Creative Writing: Reimagining Classical Mythology (Spring 2023)
EN 408: Topics in Advanced Creative Writing: Nature Writing (Spring 2023)
EN329: Engaging with Japanese Literature and Art (Summer 2023)
EN 311: Oxford Fantasy Literature (Summer 2024 at Worcester College, Oxford)
EN 308: Novella Writing (Spring 2025)
EN 308: Writing the Weird (Spring 2024)
EN308: Hybrid Forms (Fall 2023)
EN 301: Intermediate Creative Writing: Fiction (Fall 2024, Fall 2023, Fall 2022, Summer 2022, Fall 2021)
EN 219: Honors Early American Literature (Fall 2021)
EN 216: Honors British Literature II, 1780-present (Spring 2020)
EN 215: Honors Early British Literature (Spring 2022)
EN 209: Early American Literature (Summer 2023, Spring 2025)
EN 206: British Literature II, 1780-present (Fall 2019)
EN 205: British Literature I (Spring 2021)
EN 200: Intro to Creative Writing (Fall 2024, Summer 2024, Fall 2023, Fall 2022, Spring 2021, Spring 2019)
EN 103: Composition and Research (Fall 2024)
EN 102: Composition II (Spring 2025, Spring 2024, Spring 2023, Spring 2022)
EN 101: Composition I (Fall 2023, Fall 2022, Fall 2021, Fall 2018)
Alabama Prison Arts + Education Project: The Art of Brevity: Flash Fiction through the Ages (Creative Writing and Literature Course, William E. Donaldson Correctional Facility, Spring 2021)

Alabama Prison Arts + Education Project: The Art of Brevity: Flash Fiction through the Ages
(Creative Writing and Literature Course, Julia Tutwiler Prison for Women, Fall 2020)

Teaching as Primary Instructor at the University of Alabama, Birmingham:

EH 106: Developmental Writing: Writing the Self (Spring 2021)
EH 101: Composition: Memoir Writing (Fall 2020)
EH 096: Developmental Writing Lab (Spring 2021)

Teaching as Primary Instructor at the University of Michigan:

EN 124: Fantasy Literature (Summer 2018)
EN 124: World Mythology (Spring 2018, Fall 2017)
EN 124: Weird Fiction (Winter 2016, Fall 2015)
EN 125: Writing and Academic Inquiry (Winter 2015, Fall 2014)

Teaching as Graduate Student Instructor at the University of Michigan:

EN 312/ENV 354: History & Literature of the Rockies (Summer 2015, Jackson, Wyoming)
EN 312/ENV 354: History & Literature of the Rockies (Summer 2014, Jackson, Wyoming)
EN 362: The American Novel (Winter 2014)
EN 363: The Modern British Novel (Fall 2013)

Service at the University of Alabama:

Co-director of the UA at Oxford program (current)
Member of the Fulbright Scholarship review committee (current)
Faculty Advisor for the UA Writers Guild (current)
Judge for the Ruth Larcom Scholarship Contest (2022)
MFA Student Mentor (2021-22)

Literary & Graduate School Awards, Grants, and Honors:

Awarded UA Subvention Grant to collaborate with two artists for *Hermits Die on Thursday* (2024)
The Gospel of Rot longlisted for the Crook's Corner Book Prize for best debut novel set in the American South (2023)
Georgia Author of the Year Nominee (2023)
Winner of College of Humanities and Fine Arts Award for Outstanding Non-Traditional Master's Thesis, University of Alabama (2022)
Winner of Department Award for Outstanding Non-Traditional Thesis by an MFA Student, University of Alabama (2022)
Nominated for a Pushcart Prize by *The Journal* (2020)
Outstanding Research by an MFA Student Award, University of Alabama (2020)
Selected to Attend 5-day Virtual Graduate Student Winter Residency at the National Humanities Center ("How to Create Meaningful Online Learning Experiences") (2020)
Alabama Prison Arts and Education Project Fellow (Fall 2020)
Graduate Research Award to hike the Appalachian Trail, University of Alabama (Summer 2019)

Graduate Council Fellowship, University of Alabama (2018-2020)
Graduate Research Grant for Harry Ransom Center at the University of Texas, Austin,
University of Michigan (2017)
English Department Grant for Language Study in Berlin, Germany, University of Michigan
(2016)
Graduate Research Grant for University of Chicago Special Collections, University of Michigan
(2016)
Samuel Beckett Summer School Bursary to Trinity College, Dublin, University of Michigan
(2015)
John D'Arms Summer Fellowship, University of Michigan (2015)
Harris Fund for Creative Writing, University of Michigan (2014)
Harris Fund for Creative Writing, University of Michigan (2013)
Award for Achieving Distinction from Oxford University, U.K. (2010)
Crewe Graduate Scholarship from Oxford University, U.K. (2009)

Presentations and Readings:

- Pure Products Reading Series, University of Alabama (2024)
- Invited reader for the Kaleidoscope Series at Jacksonville State University, AL (2024)
- Talk on Book Publishing for the UA Creative Writing Presents Series (2023)
- Reading and craft talk at Thank You Books, Birmingham, AL (2023)
- Reading and process talk at Ernest & Hadley Booksellers, Tuscaloosa, AL (2022)
- Reading with Ann Hite at Malaprop's Bookstore, Asheville, N.C. (2022)
- Pure Products Reading Series, University of Alabama (2021)
- SAML (Jacksonville, Florida): "The Rural Speculative" Panel Chair, with Professor Jessica Fordham Kidd (2020)
- CLASSIFICATION (Conference at the University of Toronto): "Franz Kafka and American Confessional Prose-Poetry: Generic, Temporal, and Phylogenetic Seams" (2018) [funded]
- Low Fidelity: The Aesthetics and Politics of Adaptation (Graduate Conference at University of California, Los Angeles): "The Possibility of Being Kafka: Imitation in American Short Fiction, 1937-1955" (2016) [funded]
- Economy of Scales Graduate Conference (University of Michigan): "Switzerland of the South: Northern Constructions of the Appalachian Mountains, ca. 1830-1880" (2014)
- Society of Southern Literature Conference (in Washington, D.C.): "Switzerland of the South: Northern Constructions of the Appalachian Mountains, ca. 1830-1880" (2014) [funded]

Languages:

German (advanced reading)
Latin (intermediate reading)

Professional Memberships:

Association of Writers and Writing Programs
Modernist Studies Association

Non-academic Service:

Assistant Editor for *Black Warrior Review* (2018-2020)
Young Writers Camp Teacher, Tuscaloosa, AL (Summer 2021)
AmeriCorps (Montana Conservation Corps Crew Member, May-November 2011)

References:

Dr. Julian Levinson (Samuel Shetzer Professor of American Jewish Studies and Associate Professor of English Language and Literature at the University of Michigan–Ann Arbor): jlevinso@umich.edu
Dr. Kellie Wells (Associate Professor of Creative Writing at the University of Alabama, Tuscaloosa): kwells@ua.edu
Dr. Wendy Rawlings (Professor and Director of the MFA Program in Creative Writing at the University of Alabama, Tuscaloosa): wendy.rawlings@ua.edu